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NEUTRALITY VERSUS JUSTICE

AN ESSAY ON
INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS

By A. J. JACOBS

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PREFATORY NOTE

IN offering this small contribution to the discussion of international problems which are now receiving universal attention, my only claim to be heard among so many who speak with recognised authority is that I have devoted half a lifetime of earnest thought to the subject. With a profound sense of the magnitude of the evils of war, but without any preconceived ideas as to the possibility of averting them, I have tried to discern the fundamental principle to which men owe the safety and justice which they enjoy individually, and to re-examine the problem of international relations in the light of that principle. How far I may have succeeded is for the reader to judge, but whether my conclusions possess any value or not, they have only been reached

after long and painstaking investigation. In order to preserve the detachment of mind which I believed to be essential, I have never identified myself with the peace movement in any of its phases, nor allowed myself an interest in party politics even to the extent of recording a political vote.

If this humble effort should help in the smallest degree to quicken the process by which nations are being forced into a real association, as surely and inevitably as men have always been forced to submit to membership of an organised society, my object will have been fully attained.

A. J. JACOBS.

BRISTOL, *August*, 1917.

NEUTRALITY VERSUS JUSTICE

I

THIS is not a plea for the entry of neutral states into the present conflict of nations, as the title may seem to suggest, but is the outcome of a serious and prolonged study of the twin problems of national safety and international justice, undertaken some years ago in a calmer atmosphere than the present. It is the writer's purpose to direct attention to the seemingly unrecognised principle of *mutual protection*, which underlies the dispensation of justice in every community, irrespective of its degree of civilisation or form of government, and

to submit that a clear perception of that fundamental sociological principle shows :

That the time-honoured policy of NEUTRALITY TOWARDS BELLIGERENTS is incompatible with national safety or international justice.

That there is a safe and practical alternative policy based on the opposite principle of MUTUAL PROTECTION, requiring neither arbitration treaties nor disarmament agreements.

That the same impulse which has driven nations of dissimilar culture and ideals to enter into defensive alliances that have almost imperceptibly grown into two great international groups, will also force them to take a further step in the same direction, and merge these groups into one combination for mutual defence.

That the apparent impracticability of a general defensive alliance, without the simultaneous acceptance of an international tribunal, is a demonstrable fallacy.

That a real system of international law and the machinery for its administration cannot be secured by any paper guarantees, but must inevitably evolve from the situation created by an international alliance for territorial defence.

Incredible as it may seem, the problem of international justice is almost invariably discussed with entire disregard of a truth which furnishes the key to its solution, hence the apparent hopelessness of any permanent betterment of international relations. A fresh examination of the subject leads to the conclusion that so far as individuals enjoy peace and justice and safety, those blessings, unattainable by *nations* in the past for reasons which no longer hold good, can be brought within the reach of all civilised peoples when the terrible war now raging shall have run its course. Furthermore, this will probably be achieved by ordinary diplomatic methods, without the stimulus of public opinion or any access of moral fervour on the part of rulers or peoples

Notwithstanding certain features which seem to point to the contrary, the problem of justice for nations is essentially the same as for individuals, and it cannot be usefully studied unless that is kept steadily in view. It is rightly assumed that if international affairs ever come to be effectively regulated by law, any system for adjusting the rival claims of nations must bear some analogy to that employed in every community for the accommodation of the conflicting interests of its members; but so faintly is the true basis of justice comprehended, that the initial step which must be taken before nations can be brought under its sway is not made evident.

The administration of justice within a community obviously depends in the last resort upon the enforcement of law, but it is necessary for the present purpose to keep in mind the precise *origin* of that force which is available in every community for making law effective. The power to enforce law is, of course, derived from the community as a whole, each

individual member, by helping to maintain a body of police, shares the duty of protecting any other member against violence or injustice. Although this is so manifestly true, it seems to be only imperfectly realised that *society is based upon the practice of mutual protection among its members*. Even before co-operating with his fellows for defence against attack from outside, each member of a community needs protection against the persons among whom he dwells. A man lives securely among his fellows, not because he is so well armed that none of them dare molest him, nor because every one of them has a scrupulous regard for his rights, but because an attack upon him by any among them would be resisted by all the others, who maintain and enforce a system of law for the purpose. He is entitled to the protection which his fellows accord him only because he performs a similar service for each of *them*. Prehistoric men could not gratify their social proclivities and enjoy the advantage of communal life until they

were impelled by the instinct of self-preservation to defend one another against the violence of any turbulent member. This is the starting-point from which every system of law has been developed. Justice is upheld, not by each man defending his own rights and always respecting the rights of his fellows; it would be physically impossible for him to do the one without assistance, and supremely difficult for him to do the other unless subjected to some restraint. Justice prevails because the individual helps to defend the rights of any of his fellows, by which means alone his own rights are protected, whilst it is at the same time made difficult for him to encroach upon the rights of another if he should be tempted to do so. The dispensation of all human justice rests upon the general practice of *mutual protection*, from which the entire machinery of the law of any community has been evolved and derives its motive power.

II

The bearing of this upon the international problem will be readily seen. A nation is a vast organised aggregation of individuals, and since those who direct its policy (whether they truly represent the people or not) are neither more nor less than human, there can be no national interests or ambitions which have not their counterpart in the conflicting interests and ambitions of individuals. This being so, a nation's safety and rights should be defensible by some method analogous to that which maintains the safety and rights of the individual. It seems clear that *personal* safety and social peace depend upon the practice of mutual protection, without which no justice could be administered, and it may be confidently asserted that *national* safety and international peace must be based upon that same principle, although its mode of application will naturally be different.

An inquiry as to how far the principle of mutual protection is observed among nations shows that in the absence of a special treaty obligation no nation accepts any responsibility for the safety of another. There is, of course, very good reason why this deliberate policy of non-interference in the conflicts of other nations came to be generally adopted, but it is perfectly certain that were individual men to act in the same way when their personal interests are not directly affected, and leave other members of the community free to settle their disputes and determine the ownership of property by a resort to the dagger and pistol, the inevitable result would be anarchy and the total disappearance of civilisation.

The practice of nations is thus entirely at variance with the principle of *mutual protection* to which individuals owe the security of life and property which they enjoy. It is only by bringing their practice into conformity with that of individuals that the same sense of security will be engendered among

nations. The formation of an international alliance for territorial defence is quite practicable, and there is no apparent reason why an agreement for that purpose should not be embodied in the settlement at the end of the present war. It is quite conceivable that such an agreement might greatly facilitate that settlement. A general treaty for mutual defence would be extremely simple in character. It would interfere in no way with existing defensive alliances, which need not be discarded until confidence in the larger treaty had been fully established. No agreement for arbitration would be embodied in this treaty, nor even an undertaking to refrain from making war. Every existing guarantee for national security would remain unimpaired, and each country could retain full liberty to decide for itself, at all times, the extent of its military preparations. Moreover, the adherence of every one of the powers would not be essential, so that no impossible unanimity would be called for, although the full advantage of mutual

protection among nations could not, of course, be secured until general support had been obtained. It would be necessary for complete success that those nations which might decline to enter the alliance at the outset should constantly be made to feel that their adhesion was desired. Sooner or later the occasion would arise when the self interest of any outstanding nation (if no higher consideration) would prompt it to come in. There is no valid ground for a nation's refusal to enter a convention of sovereign states, to treat invasion of the territory of any one of them as an act of war against all of them. Let the reader, of whatever nationality, ask himself whether he could refuse to support his country in sharing with the rest of the world the duty of suppressing international robbery and violence, knowing that in helping to enforce this elementary justice his country would be taking the most effective means of ensuring its own safety. International friendship and brotherhood are mistakenly believed to afford the only safeguard

against future strife, but the peaceful intercourse enjoyed by individuals is based on *justice*, which is secured, not by friendliness or brotherly feeling, but by the practice of mutual protection. So far as friendship or brotherliness affect the course of justice at all, they tend to obstruct it.

III

At first sight an international treaty for mutual defence may appear to deprive an aggrieved nation of its only chance of redress, and may seem to attempt the enforcement of peace without justice. It may be objected that whilst a general alliance for mutual defence might protect the territory of the allied nations from invasion, it does not provide for the adjustment of their conflicting interests ; but it is evident that a community cannot dispense justice among its individual members until it has been made impossible for each of them to enforce justice for

himself, and that is as true of the community of nations as it is of individuals. A wrong committed by one signatory state against another, and which cannot be redressed without making war, must be endured until the combined nations accept a still further measure of responsibility by agreeing to enforce justice in that particular matter, thus creating a precedent which would probably be followed in other similar cases. It is practically certain that this further responsibility would be undertaken, but failing that, what would be the consequence? Most assuredly not a perpetuation of the injustice, because under those circumstances there would be a speedy dissolution of the compact.

A grievance suffered by any *one* nation might fail to move the general body to take action for its redress, but as various interests of each of the signatory states would be similarly exposed to infringement, all of them would have an equally strong motive for the suppression of injustice. No doubt the alliance would be

subjected to considerable strain from time to time, just as fresh enactments sometimes threaten the peace of a community ; but if the evolution of law and order among individuals may be taken as any criterion, nations, like men, will assent to reasonable and necessary restraints imposed by the general body, in order to preserve the overwhelming advantages of mutual protection.

Contrary to the general view, a defensive alliance will *not* stereotype international conditions ; the prohibition of the use of force has not done so among individuals. It is true that there has grown up a system of law which regulates the affairs of individuals, but their changes of fortune are not brought about by the judgments of a court ; they are the outcome of transactions entered into voluntarily by the parties concerned, and one of the principal functions of the law is to prevent or punish any forcible disturbance of those arrangements. A defensive alliance will do the same among nations.

An agreement to accept the judgment of a tribunal upon disputed questions is generally considered an essential part of any plan for the avoidance of war, because it is thought that without such agreement no nation could pursue a just claim against another, or protect itself against injury other than invasion of its territory. But it is obvious that under modern conditions an aggrieved nation could certainly take reprisals (not of a military nature) that would cause more or less serious injury to the offender, and as neither could resort to force unless prepared to fight a world-wide alliance, the contending parties would sooner or later settle their differences either by direct negotiation, or by the familiar method of taking the decision of some impartial tribunal, like that provided at the Hague, or set up specially for the occasion. A code of law, enforced by all the nations against any of them for the protection of each, would thus be gradually evolved in the same way that every system of national law has grown

up as a result of the observance among individuals of the indispensable duty of mutual protection.

IV

Having regard to the endless ramifications of any highly-developed system of law, it may well seem that the establishment of law and order among nations must be an extremely complex and difficult problem. It should be borne in mind, however, that every judicial system originated in and has grown up out of the simple duty forced by necessity upon primitive men to protect one another against personal violence. Similarly, all that is required (or that it will be found possible to obtain) in order to initiate a system of international justice is *an agreement between independent states binding themselves to defend the territorial integrity of each, no matter by whom or for what reason attacked*. This is nothing

more than a defensive alliance open to all nations, but with the essential feature that its object is not only to defend any one of the contracting parties against attack from outside, but also to resist aggression by any of the allied nations themselves upon any other nation within the alliance. Such a compact will bring nations for the first time into the same relationship as individuals stand toward each other, and just as that relationship is a fundamental condition not only of law and order among individuals, but also of their moral progress, so it is equally vital to the maintenance of peace and justice between those great organised groups of individuals which constitute nations.

A nation must be taken to include all its colonies, possessions, and protectorates, and it is important that no right should be given under the proposed agreement to interfere by force between a state and its own subjects, or the population of territory within its recognised sphere of influence. The frontiers of all territory

belonging to or controlled by each signatory state must be strictly defined and scheduled in the treaty, and any subsequent extension of a nation's territory, however it may have been obtained, must be formally recognised by the other signatories, otherwise they would be released from their treaty obligation towards that nation. It is not contemplated that the alliance should be employed either to assist or to resist any people engaged in a struggle against its own government, this being a purely internal matter, and, as such, the present international attitude of non-interference would remain unchanged.

There is a mistaken impression that a general defensive treaty would tend to perpetuate existing tyrannies; but any harm that might seem to threaten the cause of liberty as a result of the association for mutual defence of free nations with despotically-governed peoples must be produced already within each of the present allied groups.¹ The combination

¹ This was written before the revolution in Russia.

of these rival groups into a world-wide defensive alliance, by enhancing national safety and preventing foreign aggression, would curtail the power of militarism in each country, and give an immense stimulus everywhere to the forces that make for freedom. The oppression which subject races often suffer is an evil which no humanitarian can ignore, but it is not the particular evil for which immediate redress is here being sought. Slavery flourished whilst slave-owners lived peacefully under laws which afforded little or no protection to their bondmen. The emancipation which made justice possible between the slave and his former owner could hardly have come about in the absence of a system of justice among the people of the slave-owning class. It is not to be expected that subject peoples will obtain justice at the hands of powerful nations until the latter have adopted those measures which are essential for the maintenance of justice among themselves.

The suppression of war between

independent states, great or small, must be the *beginning* of any real international justice, because nothing less than an unqualified agreement for territorial defence will remove the feeling of insecurity and consequent suspicion which alone explain the proverbial dishonesty of diplomacy, and account for its ghastly failures. If governments sometimes make war when nothing but goodwill seems necessary for its avoidance, it is because they are composed only of men and not archangels; the uninterrupted preservation of international peace without a system of mutual defence is as impossible as the maintenance of human life without the air we breathe.

V

Let it be assumed that the proposed simple treaty for territorial defence has been adopted, but *without* the establishment of any tribunal, because, as might

be expected, nations had been unable to agree upon its constitution, the extent of its powers, how far judgments must be unanimous, or exactly in what manner and by whom they must be enforced. What would be the position of a nation against which some gross wrong is committed? It could not avenge the outrage by invading the offender's territory, as it might do under present conditions, and compensate itself by the deliberate sacrifice of tens of thousands of *its own* subjects. But is that really an intolerable hardship? It would no doubt ask for an apology with compensation for any injury. This might be refused upon the ground that the action complained of was justifiable or imposed by necessity, or taken for other reasons, and there would probably be some dispute as to the facts. An impartial investigation would then be demanded, and in the event of this being refused, the aggrieved nation would either seek satisfaction by taking reprisals, or it would appeal to the signatory states to support its demand

for an inquiry. As parties to the treaty which prevented the injured nation attempting to enforce justice for itself, they could not disregard the appeal, more especially as any one of themselves might have at some time to rely upon the general body in order to obtain justice under similar circumstances. It can hardly be doubted that law among individuals owed its origin and early development to considerations like these. Although the feeling for mutual defence in primitive societies could not have survived without some kind of tribunal, it is inconceivable that this tribunal was actually set up among prehistoric men as one of the conditions of an agreement for mutual defence. It seems clear that the practice of mutual defence was always bound to lead automatically to the immediate adoption of some means, however rude, for the dispensation of justice, and if that was true of men in a primitive state of barbarism, must it not be at least as true of civilised nations, whose people have always been familiar with the idea of

law and the measures required for its administration ?

It may be said that if an agreement for mutual defence admittedly must lead to the establishment of some tribunal, it surely ought to be provided for at once in the treaty. But there is one sufficient reason against that proposal—*nations will not adopt it*. Existing alliances show that they are willing to accept the responsibility of defending each other's territory, even where there is little identity of economic interest or similarity of ideals, and it will soon be fully recognised that the surest way to disarm *any* nation's suspicion and hostility is to undertake to defend that nation. It is a very different thing, however, to bring a score or so of nations to agree upon a tribunal, and undertake in advance to accept its decisions upon any question that may arise at some future time in circumstances impossible to foresee, and to enforce the tribunal's judgments against a refractory nation in case of need. It has already been shown how, in the writer's opinion,

it must come about that judgments would be secured, and, if necessary, enforced as the result of a general treaty for mutual defence. It will be perfectly simple and practicable for two nations to appoint a tribunal for the settlement of a specific question when it has been made hopeless for either of them to resort to force, especially as friendly pressure would be exerted to that end by the other nations, no longer "neutrals," except in the sense that the individual member of society is neutral toward the parties in a case which is still *sub judice*. If international justice required to be administered as summarily, and the cases were as numerous as petty offences among individual members of an average community, no doubt it would be necessary that a fully-equipped court should be set up at once, with its doors always open, ready to try cases as they might arise. There is, however, only one offence which *must* be dealt with instantly, namely the invasion of another nation's territory, and that will have been provided for in the only practical

method by the proposed treaty for mutual defence.

Under the stress of this appalling war men of great authority and experience have lent their names to schemes for the future maintenance of peace, wherein it is always taken for granted that nothing can be done without setting up a permanent international council or tribunal. A painstaking study of the problem extending over many years forced the writer long ago to discard precisely that same view, although on a cursory examination of the subject it seems undeniable. It is necessary to realise that what personal safety is to the individual territorial integrity is to the nation, and just as municipal law was *bound* to grow out of the practice of mutual protection forced upon primitive men by the instinct of self-preservation, so an effective international law must inevitably evolve from the situation created by a general defensive treaty. The widespread alliances into which nations already group themselves in the effort to obtain national

security, tend to prove that a general treaty for mutual defence is quite practicable without the simultaneous provision of an international tribunal.

Perhaps it may be questioned whether, even to obtain complete security against attack, a great nation could wisely uphold an international arrangement which would deprive it of such power as it now possesses to maintain by force of arms any of its rights which might be encroached upon by a nation enjoying the protection of the alliance. Investigation will show that when the paramount consideration of national security no longer enters directly or indirectly into the questions which diplomacy is called upon to solve, there cannot arise any just claim which could profitably be enforced at the point of the sword, nor any legitimate grievance which a nation, even under existing conditions, would be likely to attempt to redress by waging war.

Taking for granted the possible unwillingness of some of the nations to give their adhesion to an agreement for mutual

protection, this would by no means prevent its accomplishment by the general body. Nations which entered would at once find their position relative to those outside immensely strengthened ; but any nation which stood out at first must be quite free to enter when it became convinced that its interests dictated such a step, as would almost certainly happen sooner or later. It cannot be made too clear that although each nation in the compact would have the promised support of all the others to repel any attack, it need not depend upon that support, but would be free to provide for its own defence as thoroughly as before, and would only relax its efforts if and when experience showed that any reduction of armaments could be safely effected.

VI

The attitude of each nation towards the proposed alliance for territorial defence would no doubt be determined without

regard to any theoretical considerations, but a policy which may seem expedient in itself will be adopted with greater confidence if it can at the same time be shown to conform to a sound principle.

That the practice of mutual protection is an indispensable condition of personal safety and social peace will hardly be questioned, but it may perhaps be said that this protection is not given voluntarily; that although it is true each citizen contributes toward the maintenance of law and order, he does so only under compulsion by the governing body of the community, and that inasmuch as an international governing body is unthinkable, it is impossible to argue from the case of the individual to that of the nation. This is plausible but fallacious. It would be a grotesque inversion of the facts to regard the practice of mutual protection as made possible because men happen to live under the control of government. The truth is that the very purpose for which government exists is to enable men to protect

one another. *That* is the essential thing, and all men live in subjection to constituted authority primarily because each member of a community depends for his safety upon the protection afforded by his fellows, which protection can only be given through the medium of a governing body, consisting of some person or persons invested with authority, and placed in control of an adequate amount of force. The members of a primitive tribe do not submit to curtailment of their personal liberty and accept the authority of a chief because he compels obedience by his own force of character and personal prowess, although that appears to be the generally favoured theory of the origin of government. They *must* delegate power to *someone* who will direct the force of the community, firstly for the purpose of protecting each person against violence from any of his fellow-tribesmen, and secondly in order to defend the whole community against attack from outside. In the competition for chieftainship the man of strong

personality wins, but it is entirely wrong to suppose that the ruler of a community compels its members to submit to his will by virtue of the qualities which have enabled him to overcome his rivals. Individual men cannot live together except under a ruler, and failing a strong man, they must subject themselves to a weak one. Without supervision, the individual member of a community could evade his share of responsibility for the safety of his fellow-citizens, and it is because each person's safety is absolutely dependent upon the protection which he receives from the others that he submits to the limitation of freedom which even the best kind of government involves.

Unlike individuals, however, the community of nations can practise mutual protection *without* subjecting themselves to any controlling body, because no nation could shirk the duty of helping to defend another without forfeiting its own claim to protection by the general body in case of need. Furthermore, it is only the large number of individuals which a community

embraces, and the secrecy and suddenness with which personal violence can be committed, that necessitate the setting up of an organisation for its prevention, detection, and punishment. National violence, *i.e.* war, on the other hand, must in the nature of things be open and deliberate, and therefore capable of prevention or punishment by the nations themselves (which are only comparatively few in number), without any delegation of power to a body organised for that purpose, as in the case of individuals. If, like nations, men could only injure one another after careful preparation, and with the full knowledge of all their neighbours, who would themselves always have the means and opportunity of protecting a threatened person, no police would be necessary.

The protection of the individual members of a community against danger from each other is one of the two essential functions of government, the other being to organise the defence of the community as a whole against danger from outside.

For reasons already stated, no control is necessary to enable the community of nations to protect one of themselves against attack from any of the others, and inasmuch as the nations of the world are under no necessity to organise for common defence against any extramundane foes, it will be seen that the conditions which compel individuals to subject themselves to some governing body in order to obtain personal safety are absent in the case of nations. This destroys the fantastic picture of a world-government directing a neutral police-army able to enforce obedience to international law. National safety can be attained by means which are immediately practicable, and this strengthens the presumption that a civilisation which maintains peace and justice more or less completely among men in their individual capacity is equally capable of doing so between bodies of the same men when grouped into nations.

Those who believe that human nature must undergo a change before war can

be suppressed ignore the fact that the individual member of civilised society has long been deprived by his fellows of the power to enforce his own rights. If men have been able to curb their primitive instincts so far as to organise for the peaceful settlement of matters affecting their most vital personal interests, by what process of reasoning can they be supposed incapable of doing so where only *national* rights are at stake, and no man's personal interests are directly concerned ?

VII

If it be true that the individual is able to live in safety and peace only because he helps to ensure the safety and peace of his fellows, then the insecurity of nations and the survival of warfare are fully accounted for by the fact that hitherto nations have not been compelled by force of circumstances to undertake a similar

obligation. In the effort to obtain security, and freedom to pursue their respective foreign policies without hindrance, nations enter into various defensive alliances, but the effect is only to set up hostility between rival groups instead of conflict between single states. A nation must be prepared to share the responsibility of defending against actual violence *every* other nation with which it desires to live at peace. That is the duty which each individual member of society fulfils towards every other member, even those among them who may be unquestionably bad citizens. This throws the weight of the entire community against anyone who offers violence to another, the effect being that physical force is ruled out of the struggle for existence, which must therefore be fought on the moral and intellectual plane. "Peaceful" competition is by no means free from cruelty and injustice, but the elimination of force is not only in itself a vast mitigation of those evils, it sets up the conditions under which it becomes

possible to bring about their further amelioration.

An alliance, the object of which may be purely defensive, must nevertheless tend to deepen and perpetuate any feeling of estrangement on the part of the excluded nation or nations from whom danger was apprehended. Only a very precarious peace can be obtained by an alliance *against* an unfriendly nation. There is no really practical policy except a combination for mutual defence which *includes* the nations at loggerheads. A general defensive alliance may seem to be both useless and unattainable without a solution of the questions at issue between the various nations; but so far as those questions arise from considerations of national security, they will be automatically solved by the alliance, and this will do much to remove the mutual fear and suspicion which so poison diplomatic intercourse that the adjustment of other relatively unimportant matters is often made impossible.

Nations with questions of any gravity

open between them will be unlikely to agree to participate in a general treaty for territorial defence if the matter is approached in the temper and spirit of quarrelsome street urchins or a gang of thieves ; but if common sense and common honesty are to be expected, such a treaty will be quite practicable as part of the peace settlement. It is true that sense and honesty are qualities in which statesmen and diplomatists are often said to be peculiarly deficient, hence (we are asked to believe) the low standard of international morality and the prevalence of warfare. It is a simple theory, but not very convincing. The typical diplomatist, whatever else he may or may not be, is usually a man of ability and character, who conducts his *personal* affairs honourably and peaceably. If, in the interests of his country, he is accustomed to use methods which he would scorn to employ for private ends, and if his activities sometimes lead his country to attack another people with fire and sword, the explanation of the contrast is that, unlike

individuals, nations have not yet been forced by the pressure of circumstances to subordinate every minor consideration to the paramount duty of *mutual protection*, without which the honourable and peaceful intercourse of individual men would have been equally impossible.

It is thought that existing national antipathies and suspicions must be removed before a general defensive treaty can be brought about, but the truth is, that in the absence of an agreement of the proposed character international suspicion is inevitable; it can only be dispelled by some treaty of the kind indicated. The impulse which has driven modern nations to seek alliances, sometimes even in defiance of a settled policy of detachment, has resulted in the formation of two powerful groups which exhibit remarkable differences of race, religion, and political ideals among the nations within each group. Their fusion into one combination pledged to defend any of its members against actual invasion (and strictly limited to that object) is a

practical policy whose realisation does not depend upon any moral uplift among the nations, but, on the contrary, is itself the indispensable condition of any advancement of international morality.

VIII

There is by no means universal agreement that permanent international peace would be desirable. Much pseudo-scientific nonsense has been written in attempting to show that war is a biological necessity. It is, of course, true that warfare illustrates the universal struggle for survival operating among nations, but the ludicrous assumption is made that it must be futile and even mischievous to frustrate or modify the working of that natural law. No heed is paid to the fact that human society is only made possible by the absolute repression of physical force in the struggle for existence among individual men, who, no matter how

strongly they may compete with each other, are not permitted by their fellows to use personal violence or carry on the contest with lethal weapons. The competitive use of force among individuals is barbarism. Civilisation is maintained by the *co-operative* employment of force, and is thus a complete reversal of the "natural" struggle for survival. Nations, therefore, need have no fear that they will be making a dangerous new precedent in defying the ways of Providence if they co-operate for the suppression of war.

It is difficult to treat seriously this argument that war is necessary for the physical improvement of the race by eliminating the unfit, and because the fighting impulse in man must be satisfied or nature will be thwarted, with evil results to the individual and the race. These contentions have no scientific warrant. It is not intended to deal with them here, but there are one or two considerations to which attention may be drawn in passing. A trifling percentage of the national expenditure on war

preparations, if devoted to infant welfare and the promotion of hygiene and physical culture, would produce within a couple of generations a vast improvement in the pitiably low standard of physical well-being at present found among large masses of the population, after many centuries of the "selective" process of war.

If, as we are told, the combative disposition in men must be stimulated, a far more effectual method than the usual military training, or even than actual experience of modern war, would be to restore the prize-ring, teach everyone the art of self-defence, and, if necessary, make pugilistic encounters obligatory upon every fit male periodically, and under conditions specially designed to best achieve the desired result. But perhaps the "benefits" of war can only be obtained at the price of blood. It may be that death and mutilation, madness and grief, widows and orphans, are all indispensable. If that be so, then let a nation improve its stock by making war

on its criminals or the physically unfit among its population, and blast *their* bodies into shapeless masses of living or dead pulp with high explosives. Does the reader say that this is treating a grave subject with callous levity? Perhaps so, but at least the proposal could be defended scientifically, and it is benign wisdom compared with the criminal lunacy of those writers who outrage common sense and mock the sufferings of humanity with the poisonous doctrine that men must continue to tolerate war lest a far worse thing befall them.

IX

It is obvious that acceptance of the principle of *mutual protection* by the general body of nations involves an abandonment of the policy of neutrality towards belligerents. This does not imply that a disagreement between two nations

necessarily becomes a matter of concern to the general body, but it means that if the quarrel cannot be settled without war it must remain unsettled ; that without the slightest regard to the merits of the dispute, an act of war against any one of the treaty nations is an act of war against *every* nation in the compact, and will be treated by them as such. Short of the actual invasion of its territory, no conceivable wrong which one nation can suffer at the hands of another nation will entitle it to the assistance of the other parties to the treaty unless and until it is agreed that such wrong shall constitute an international crime ; but if an allied country is attacked (either from within the alliance or from outside), then not only has it the right and duty to defend itself, but it will be assisted in that defence by all the other nations in the alliance.

The policy of *neutrality*, hitherto sacred to militarists and pacifists alike, is utterly incompatible with international justice or permanent international peace: If the

practice of mutual protection is a necessary condition of the judicial settlement of disagreements between individuals, or between groups of individuals like families, powerful trading companies, or municipalities, then it is not unreasonable to assume that mutual protection is also necessary for the peaceful adjustment of the conflicting interests of those larger groups of individuals known as nations.

It is not suggested here that the nations of the world have suffered ages of warfare which they could have avoided by the practice of mutual protection. There are men still living who saw the beginning of the marvellous changes which have so enormously increased the interdependence of all nations, and brought them almost literally within speaking distance of each other. Those very conditions which now make the consequences of any important warfare seriously felt throughout the civilised world have also only now made it practicable for nations to combine for the suppression of war.

X

The fact that many nations are prepared to arbitrate on certain questions encourages the false hope that an agreement for universal arbitration will be the panacea for war and injustice among nations; but it would be almost as reasonable to dispense with the power behind the law of any country, and seek to abolish violence and injustice among individuals without any reliance upon force, because *some* disputes between individuals are settled by friendly arbitration. Those who expect voluntary arbitration to abolish war and armaments very truly point out that every civilised community has set up some system of law for the peaceful adjustment of the conflicting interests of its members, and it is urged by them that what is possible for individuals should not be impossible for nations. But the administration of justice in a community is made possible,

not because every man is prepared to submit his cause to the arbitrament of law, and can be depended upon to carry out voluntarily all that the law requires of him ; the mere suggestion is absurd. The truth is that law prevails not because each man, in the interests of the general welfare, submits himself willingly to its restraints, but because he recognises law to be necessary for *his own* safety and well-being, and is therefore willing to share the duty of enforcing it upon his fellows. Human nature being what it is, a person finds it easier to insist that others shall live up to a given standard than always to conform to that standard himself. It may be objected that this view gives men no credit for altruistic feeling or a sense of justice, but without the practice of mutual protection men could exhibit neither those nor any other virtues. If this is not generally recognised it is because the principle of *mutual protection* is so deeply embedded in the foundations of the social fabric that it must be looked for beneath the surface.

Communal life, even in its most primitive form, only became possible when pre-historic man had developed enough intelligence, and had learnt by experience to realise that in order to secure himself against violence from any member of the community he must rely upon his fellows to defend or avenge him, and that he could only expect that support if prepared to give similar help to any of his fellows in case of need. To put this differently : the instinct of self-preservation prompts a man to share the duty of punishing a murderer because (apart from his detestation of the crime), if he allow murderers to go unpunished, the chances are greater that he may one day fall a victim himself.

There appears to be no true conception of the exact part played by *force* in the dispensation of human justice. Law is upheld not because each man renounces the employment of force for his own protection—he does nothing of the kind—but because he provides the force which helps to protect any of his fellows, this being the only practical means of ensuring

his own safety. In a community placed entirely beyond the reach of law, if each man disclaimed responsibility for the safety of any of his fellows, none of them would be secure against violence from any of the others, with the consequence that mutual suspicion and the resulting strife would break up the community. If, on the contrary, each person undertakes to defend any of the others, a feeling of security is induced by the knowledge that violence on the part of one or more members of the community will be repressed by all the others. These are the conditions which have alone made possible the existence of society and the progress of man from a level scarcely higher than the brutes to a state of which its best exemplars are but little lower than the angels. Neither religion nor any other civilising influence could have begun to make an appeal to the minds of men until they had advanced far enough to live more or less peaceably together by the exercise of that *mutual protection* which constitutes the foundation upon

which every community builds up a system of law to correspond with its needs.

XI

Although mutual protection may be admitted as indispensable to law and order among individuals, the proposition that it is equally so in the case of nations will perhaps be disputed. It may be argued that if all men since prehistoric times have been forced by necessity to practise mutual protection, the fact that nations have not adopted the same principle tends to show that its application to them is either unnecessary or impossible. The answer to this is, that it is only within the last few decades that the civilised peoples of the world have been brought into such intimate relation with each other that war between any two great nations involves more or less serious injury to the interests of all the

others. The individual member of every community must help to protect any of his fellows because it is essential for his own safety and well-being that he should do so. Nations have not hitherto undertaken to defend any one of themselves against attack, because war has not very seriously affected non-belligerent countries, whose interests have generally required that they should carefully abstain from taking sides, and not allow themselves to be dragged into a conflict. The modern interdependence of nations has changed all this, and each of them now has a direct interest in the maintenance of the world's peace, which it can effectively help to ensure only in the same way as the individual helps to maintain the peace of a community, namely, by undertaking to resist and punish aggression wherever it may be found.

It is noteworthy that even if international peace had always been as vitally important to non-belligerents as now, it would not have been practicable before the era of steam and the telegraph to plan

or carry out with the necessary promptitude combined operations on a world-wide scale for the defence of a threatened country; nor, in the past, could the nations have applied that irresistible economic pressure which they would now be able to exert in order to prevent or punish aggression, even without resorting to armed force. These considerations lend support to the view that if justice has not prevailed among nations, even to the same extent as among the members of a primitive tribe, it cannot be that civilised nations lack some virtue which has always been possessed by their individual members, but because it is only now, owing to modern developments, that the conditions which compel individuals in self defence to protect one another have become paralleled in the case of nations.

The protection afforded by the individual member of a community to his fellows is given alike to the strong and the weak, to rich and poor, to the law-abiding citizen and the criminal, and

even to his enemies no less than to his friends ; if there is any analogy between the case of individuals and that of nations, then it must be a condition of international peace and justice that a nation shall be prepared to assist in defending any other nation willing to reciprocate, and must not confine its help to those nations with which it may have sentimental ties or common interests.

A treaty for mutual defence, embracing at least the principal nations engaged in the present struggle on both sides, with the addition of as many as possible of the independent neutral states, is the only guarantee for the future peace of the world. Without this no victory, however crushing, will prevent further outbreaks. The chivalrous protection of weak nations will not suffice to maintain peace ; powerful states also must be protected against one another, and it is, of course, an easier task to defend a strong nation than a weak one. There is no greater moral obligation to defend a weak nation against attack than to defend a strong

one. The agonies of war are felt as deeply by the inhabitants of a great state whose territory is invaded as by those of a small one, and the sufferers will probably be much more numerous. The possibility of international friction must always be reckoned with, but no policy can be safer for two nations whose relations may be unsatisfactory than to join an international agreement for mutual defence (without prejudice to any matters which may be in dispute), nor could anything be better calculated to improve the feeling between them.

It may be thought that without entire mutual confidence no two nations will enter into a defensive treaty, because neither could be assured that the other would fulfil its undertaking, but this difficulty is more apparent than real. If *Redland* and *Blueland* agree to defend one another, and *Redland* should be attacked, *Blueland* must adopt one of two courses. Either it will refuse to help *Redland* (in which case each nation will occupy a position neither better nor

worse than if no agreement had been made), or it will fulfil its treaty obligation and come to *Redland's* assistance, thereby earning its gratitude, and so obtain a stronger guarantee of its help in return, if the need should arise, than any treaty in itself could provide. It must also be remembered that neither of them would be under any obligation to act except in conjunction with the other nations in the compact, and that a refusal by either to fulfil its undertaking would forfeit its own claim to protection, and thus sacrifice the object for which it entered the alliance.

XII

There is no means by which a nation can hope to secure peace for itself or effectively help to prevent war, unless it is willing to share the responsibility of defending the peace of other nations. That is the price which individuals have to pay for the social order which they

enjoy, and international peace cannot be obtained any more cheaply. Various schemes are propounded which seek to maintain peace, by requiring all disputes to be submitted for arbitration or inquiry; but these projects are foredoomed to failure, because they make no attempt to give to a nation that definite assurance of protection against violence which even the most hardened criminal receives from society. Without that assurance a nation will agree to no plan which, under any conceivable circumstances, might prejudice its chances of success in a struggle for existence. The delay which arbitration (without enforcement of awards) is intended to secure, would generally be disadvantageous to *one* side if the quarrel should eventually be fought out. There would also be the possibility of witnessing the utter defeat of a nation in defending what the tribunal might have declared to be its undoubted rights. Is a situation of that kind to be contemplated? On the other hand, arbitration with enforcement of awards might require the nations

to employ force for an object considered inadequate, or with which all were not in full sympathy.

Nations will undertake to fight in defence of a country against an invading army, but they will refuse to place themselves at the disposal of a tribunal to enforce decisions which may only be reached after much legal hair-splitting. To give a tribunal power to enforce its decision upon every question that might arise, would involve a much more complete surrender of the liberty of each nation than the law of any free people requires of the individual citizen, who is bound only by a code of which every article must first receive the sanction of those who have to submit to it. Among individuals, a wrong which does not infringe the strict letter of the law has to be endured until the community expressly agrees to make it illegal, and undertakes to prevent or punish it. How can nations be expected to go beyond that? It will be found impossible to make material progress towards the establishment of

any effective law among nations, until they have entered into a definite alliance for territorial defence which will guarantee national security, and deter any one nation from the employment of force for the coercion of another.

It is universally felt that no complete system for the dispensation of international justice can ever be brought into operation readymade ; the question of practical importance is to determine what is the natural line of advance by which it will ultimately be reached. The origin of law among individuals, so far as it can be discerned, does not support the belief that law among nations would grow out of a treaty for unlimited arbitration even if generally adopted, and experience shows that it is doubtful whether a single great nation could be found willing to participate in such a treaty, sincerely as it may desire to co-operate for the maintenance of peace.

Arbitration, with the customary reservation of questions affecting "honour or vital interests," would fail to give nations

the indispensable guarantee of security, because any matter considered worth fighting for might always be regarded as coming within that category. A general defensive alliance, however, corresponds to the practice of mutual protection, which the instinct of self-preservation must have forced upon the individual members of the very earliest social groups, and thus produced the conditions out of which every system of justice has developed. It is beyond doubt that an international defensive alliance would be more generally acceptable than a treaty for unlimited arbitration, because almost every great power has entered into many defensive alliances, but not one of them has ever agreed to a treaty for unlimited arbitration with another.

XIII

It is frequently asserted that nations will not give up the right to make war, because a virile and growing population

must find room for expansion, which it is believed can only be gained by force of arms. In considering this, it may be pointed out that no party to the proposed treaty would relinquish the "right" to make war, or give any undertaking not to break the peace; the obligation would extend no further than to help in resisting *any other* nation which might be tempted to make an attack. Nevertheless, the effect of the treaty, of course, would be to prevent a nation acquiring territory *by conquest*, no matter how desirable or even necessary its possession might be. If the pressure of population were likely to create a problem which would have to be faced by some of the nations in the near future, this might be thought a serious obstacle to the formation of a general defensive alliance, but it is doubtful whether there is even one country of which that could truly be said.

Assuming that some nations may stand aloof in order to retain their present freedom to wage wars of conquest, the

other nations at whose expense these conquests must be made would need no persuasion to combine for mutual defence, and the fact that they did so combine would deprive a policy of conquest of much of its erstwhile attractiveness, and perhaps tend to divert attention to other and more civilised methods of providing for surplus populations and securing new markets. It may be expected that the dissentient nations would prey upon each other ; but the weaker of them, if at any time in danger of attack, would be glad to secure the protection of the alliance which must be freely accorded, and it is in this way that every civilised nation without exception will be brought eventually to share the duty of preserving the world's peace.

How, it may be asked, could a nation be sure of obtaining a necessary extension of territory unless by conquest ? Although the question may have no immediate practical interest, it deserves attention, and the answer is provided by the analogous case of individuals. A family

which has outgrown its home does not obtain a more commodious dwelling by fighting for it, nor by proving the necessity for it, but by paying the rental or purchase price out of the proceeds of its industry and skill. A nation must do the same. The cost of a war of conquest would probably yield a far better return if utilised for the peaceable acquisition and development of territory, or to secure trading and industrial opportunities for its growing population. It might not always be possible to acquire sovereign rights over territory which nevertheless could be made available for colonisation, but a nation prepared to offer adequate compensation could certainly obtain all the advantages of full sovereignty except the name, and that must suffice. If the international anarchy which has prevailed in the past is to be allowed to continue indefinitely, it must be for a more solid reason than to enable a nation to make alterations in the colour of the map. Many thousands of the subjects of every great state find it tolerable to live in

foreign countries under alien jurisdiction, and there is no reason to doubt that the colonists of any nation could live quite happily under *their own* laws and institutions without hurt to their national pride, even though the nominal sovereignty might not be vested in their mother country.

A nation with limited resources might be unable to negotiate successfully for territory, but under modern conditions that nation would have no better chance of succeeding in a war of conquest. The present struggle has shown that without industrial efficiency and the wealth which it produces a resort to force would be hopeless. If a nation could not offer sufficient inducement to obtain *by agreement* a necessary transfer of territory for colonising purposes, it would be equally powerless to do so by means of conquest.

XIV

The idea of international justice is so commonly identified with the renunciation of force, that there is an evident failure to perceive that the dispensation of justice among individuals requires, not that a person shall surrender the right to employ force for his own protection, but that he shall be willing, if necessary, to exercise the utmost force of which he is capable in order to protect any of his fellows. If this seems to run counter to the doctrine of non-resistance to evil, it at least fulfils the injunction to bear one another's burdens ; if mutual protection does not require that a man shall love his enemies, it calls upon him to assist in defending even his enemy against outrage. To do unto others that which a man would have others do to him, surely involves the protection of another against personal violence. It may be a man's duty to suffer harm *himself* without

retaliating, but it must be a false interpretation of the doctrine of "non-resistance" to assert that he may not defend *another man* from harm. To "turn the other cheek" is quite *consistent* with the employment of force for the protection of one's fellows, upon which the administration of justice and the very existence of society depend. A wrong-doer must receive punishment, not, of course, at the hands of the victim himself, who may be dead as a result of the crime, or full of forgiveness if he has survived it, but inflicted by the entire community through the medium of the law. This is the fundamental condition of peaceful human intercourse, and is as true of nations as of individuals.

A person does not "love" his "enemy" merely because he refrains from doing him an injury, nor by remaining neutral if another person attacks him. A man must display "love" for his "enemy" by undertaking to defend him in case of need, and so convert him into a friend. It is not enough to defend only a person whose

cause is just. *Every* man's cause is just, in so far as he resists an attack by another. No person is entitled to attack another for *any* reason. Force may only be employed in the name of all the members of a community for the purpose of protecting any one of them against violence or injustice at the hands of any other of them. *The instrument employed for the enforcement of justice must be available for the coercion, if necessary, of any one of those for whose protection it is designed.* That is the test of its legitimacy, applied either to individuals or nations.

No other view of the ethics of force reconciles the doctrine of "non-resistance" with the "Law" which Jesus declared that He came to fulfil. The Mosaic teaching of "eye for eye" laid upon each man the obligation to protect *his fellows* against violence, not to avenge *his own* injuries, as is often mistakenly believed; for when have men ever needed exhortation to take a personal revenge? The Old Testament calls upon a man to

redress a wrong done to *his neighbour*, and if the New Testament requires him to suffer unresistingly a wrong done to himself there is no inconsistency ; indeed, the later teaching becomes practicable only because the earlier code is habitually observed. The one merely supplements and cannot possibly supersede the other. The common interpretation of the doctrine of "non-resistance," however, not only sets up a discord between the two dispensations, but is also in direct conflict with the unmistakable language of Jesus Himself. The perversion of the doctrine into something entirely out of accord with the fundamental principle which underlies all peaceful human intercourse, raises the interesting question how far this distortion may have led indirectly to that monstrous glorification of force which had already disgraced modern Germany even before she incurred the guilt of letting loose this devastating war.

No society exists or has ever existed except by virtue of the protection which the individual must receive from his

fellows, and the moral even more surely than the material level attained in any civilisation can be gauged by the certainty and completeness with which that protection is given. In a state of pure savagery man uses force for his own protection and advantage alone; as a member of society, however primitive, he has learnt to employ force on behalf of his fellows also; and it is only in communities where the obligation has come to be accepted universally and as a matter of course, that it is possible for men even to conceive a state of things in which the use of force shall not be required at all. *Nations*, now having been brought into close and permanent contact as a result of modern developments, are only just emerging from the first stage. The same instinct of self-preservation which led prehistoric men to defend each other (thus forming a rudimentary society) has prompted almost every great power to co-operate with one or more of the others for defensive purposes. These alliances still leave any one group exposed to the

risk of embroilment with another group, and it is only when all have entered into a single combination, making the entire body responsible for the safety of any of its members, that it will become possible for a nation, however peace-loving, always to avoid the necessity of resorting to force, profoundly shocking as the consequences of an outbreak must be to the feelings of every civilised people, whether itself engaged in the struggle or not.

XV

The maintenance of peace and justice appears to be so entirely a *moral* problem, that doubt may be felt whether any such consideration as the propinquity of nations can enter seriously into the matter. Yet a simple illustration will suffice to show the importance of the factors of time and space. Let the entire population of the most peaceable city in a highly-civilised country be imagined as

re-settled upon some vast unoccupied territory, in single homesteads, each distant several days' journey from any other, without postal or telegraph service, railways, roads, or any means whatever of rapid communication. Although this could not, of course, affect the individual's trustworthiness or his conception of social duty, the change would immediately weaken the feeling of security which, as members of a compact society, the same people previously enjoyed. The criminally disposed element present in every community, however small it might be, could no longer be kept under proper surveillance by the police force, which the law-abiding citizens had formerly organised for their mutual protection. Isolated homes would be exposed to depredation, and most people for the first time would find it necessary to possess weapons with which to defend themselves and their property in case of need. Peace would be liable to disturbance not only by those people with criminal tendencies; the average man who filled

the part of a worthy and peaceable citizen when his safety was assured, his threatened rights protected, and his baser impulses restrained by the collective action and the public opinion of his fellows, would often fail to live up to the same standard under the changed conditions. Disputes in which each party firmly believed right to be on his own side would sometimes lead to bloodshed, because the law, which might nominally survive, could not be readily invoked, and would be practically impossible to enforce.

Even if news of a threatened breach of the peace should reach any other persons not directly concerned, they could only be few in number, and the obstacles to effective intervention would be so great owing to their remoteness from the scene of the trouble and from each other, that it would come to be thought necessary to abstain altogether from interference in other people's quarrels. Perhaps it would be some justification for this attitude of "neutrality" that a man would be able to do little or nothing for the protection

of another person without leaving his own home entirely undefended. These considerations will serve to show that men or nations cannot enjoy safety and peace until they live in sufficiently intimate contact to produce the growth of a public opinion, and to make it possible for concerted action to be taken for the enforcement of the common will in case of need.

XVI

It may be argued that an international agreement to punish war as a crime will not necessarily lead to its abolition. If crimes of violence are committed by individuals despite the penalties attaching to them, will not they also be committed against nations regardless of the consequences? Possibly, but there are circumstances which make it highly improbable. The crimes of individuals fall into two categories: those which are

committed under the influence of the over-mastering passion of the moment, and calculated crimes which are committed on the chance, however remote, that the criminal may be able to escape detection and punishment. It is hardly necessary to point out that a nation cannot be swept into war in a momentary fit of temper (the war fever which often accompanies an outbreak is by no means the same thing), nor can there ever be any doubt about the identity of a nation whose armed forces are found within the frontiers of another country. Further, the element of sex, and vices like gambling and intemperance, which enter so largely into the crimes of individuals, are absent in the case of nations. Add to these considerations the fact that the hopelessness of conquest will ensure each nation's territorial integrity, also that even under existing circumstances most nations are willing to arbitrate on matters which do not affect their vital interests, and it will be seen that there is small likelihood that a nation will deliberately attack another

when that has been made an international crime which the other nations are pledged to resist. If, against all the probabilities, a nation should determine to make war, it would be the hopeless fight of a criminal against the forces of law and order ; and although the preponderance of force against an aggressive nation could not be so overwhelming as the power of a community exerted against an individual criminal, it would be quite sufficient to leave no room for doubt as to the result of the conflict.

There is a very general impression that warfare between nations corresponds to crime among individuals, in so far that both are thought to represent imperfect human nature breaking the bounds of law ; but that is a mistaken belief, because even the most frankly aggressive warfare is at present permitted by the so-called law of nations. What is known as international law bears little resemblance to national law. It does not greatly concern itself with the prevention of strife, but chiefly lays down rules under which fighting

should be conducted in order to prevent unnecessary suffering, and attempts to regulate warfare so as to cause as little inconvenience as possible to neutrals. The existing international law, if applied among individuals, would allow a person to attack a dwelling, kill any of the inmates who resisted, and seize the property. Neighbours would be expected to refrain from interfering, even to the extent of sending for the police. Indeed, it would be a grave breach of law of the international variety to obstruct the enterprising criminal in any way. But it must not be supposed that international law stands for nothing. If the aggressor should intentionally massacre helpless children or burn alive the sleeping inmates of the house, the neutral bystanders could exercise their right to *lodge a strongly-worded protest*, due care always being taken that nothing should be done to impede the assassin's "legitimate" work of killing only so far as may be necessary for the purpose of robbery !

XVII

It is necessary to emphasise the strictly limited scope of the proposed general treaty, which must have but one object, namely, to defend the territory of each nation in the compact. Other arrangements into which any or all of the nations may think it desirable to enter must form the subject of further agreements. Nations will continue to push their respective interests by every means open to them, and in the process disputes will no doubt arise as before ; but the adjustment of these differences is not the purpose of this treaty, which is designed only to prevent a quarrel from developing into actual strife, by throwing the entire military, economic and moral force of the combination into the scale against that country (whether in the alliance or not) whose armed forces shall be found upon the territory of any other nation in the alliance.

It is because, even assuming the goodwill of all nations, there is no possibility of getting general agreement upon any hard and fast scheme for international justice at one step, that stress must be laid upon the importance of a preliminary treaty strictly confined to territorial defence, from which, if the alliance prove effective, appropriate means for obtaining and enforcing an impartial judgment in disputed matters *must* be evolved, not slowly and painfully as in the case of individuals, but rapidly and smoothly, because the immense obstacles which retarded the development of municipal law have manifestly not to be reckoned with. An agreement for mutual defence would be free from risk for any of the participant states in the event of failure, because their original diplomatic and military arrangements, so far as they were legitimate, would have remained undisturbed, and nothing worse could happen than the break-up of the combination and a return to pre-existing conditions.

XVIII

There is a widespread feeling that nothing so simple as a general treaty for mutual defence would be practicable. It is usually taken for granted that if and when nations combine for the avoidance of war their first step must be to set up an international tribunal with or without some provision for enforcing its decisions. This seems indisputable, therefore it has not been subjected to the close examination which anything less "obvious" would have received. It is even thought that a tribunal would be required to interpret the treaty for mutual defence itself, and that a standing authority must be set up to decide upon and direct its execution. But the interpretation of the treaty must be left to the signatory states themselves, as in the case of past international agreements, because no nation will at first be prepared to give up the right to decide for itself in consultation with the others exactly what part it

shall perform if an occasion for enforcement of the treaty should arise. In the event of concerted action becoming necessary, the disadvantages of this initial lack of organisation are evident, but they must be accepted if the alliance is ever to materialise, and it need not be doubted that the object of the treaty will be gained in spite of them.

There must be so clear a definition of what constitutes "invasion" as to leave no room for doubt whether invasion has taken place in any given instance, and who is the invader. For this reason, nothing less than the actual presence of foreign troops within a nation's frontiers will entitle that nation to call upon the allies for help. Until the invasion had been repelled there would be no inquiry into the merits of the dispute, and questions as to who provoked the quarrel or struck the first blow would in no way affect the duty of the nations to demand the evacuation of any invaded territory, and failing immediate compliance, to declare war collectively upon the invader.

Whether nations could be relied upon to fulfil their undertaking time alone would tell, but inasmuch as they would have participated, not for the advancement of international peace or any other ideal, but each in the interests of its own safety and welfare, it is reasonable to assume that the considerations which prompted them to enter the alliance will be weighty enough to secure a general if not entirely unanimous readiness to carry out their obligations.

It will be noticed that the definition which has been given of "invasion" does not cover action at sea. Peace might be broken by a naval attack alone. In that event, the side which considered itself attacked—it might be both—would appeal to the treaty nations, whose duty it must be to investigate the circumstances under which the fight took place, to fix the responsibility for commencing it, and decide what reparation, if any, should be made. Refusal to comply with decisions arrived at should be tantamount to a declaration of war against the

combined nations. This policy would safeguard the "Freedom of the Seas," about which so much is heard. The seas are always free to all nations in time of peace, and the only practicable way to keep them free is to combine for the suppression of war. To suppose that under modern conditions the world can enjoy the unrestricted use of the seas whilst permitting any nation to wage naval war upon another is fatuous. It would be just as reasonable to allow men to fight out their quarrels in the public thoroughfares with every kind of deadly weapon, and at the same time insist upon the maintenance of the safety and freedom of the streets for ordinary traffic.

If war should break out simultaneously on land and water, the country whose territory was invaded could claim the immediate help of the allied nations, quite regardless of the course which the sea-fighting might take or the circumstances of its origin. Also, if land fighting should begin whilst the responsibility for a purely naval outbreak was

under investigation, the inquiry would be at once abandoned, and the combined nations would enter the war on the side of the country whose territory was violated.

Of course, it would be impossible to make a close investigation into the facts of a naval encounter without setting up some impartial body to conduct it, but the establishment of a tribunal for this or any other purpose is not a necessary feature of an international defensive alliance; it should be left until some feeling of mutual confidence had grown up as a result of the treaty, and a situation calling for the services of a tribunal had arisen. No question could come up of such urgency as to interfere with the deliberation requisite in the appointment of the tribunal. No doubt it would be more satisfying to have in existence a competent tribunal with an unanimous agreement to submit to its decisions, and an executive body in control of adequate force for the coercion of any nation which might resist an adverse judgment. But

so far as experience might show these things to be necessary, it is certain that they would develop from a treaty for mutual defence. If not, then no machinery that might have been set up would prove effective. It would fail to work for want of motive power.

XIX

It cannot be doubted that the rival claims of nations, like those of individuals, must be adjudicated in order to avoid strife; but the important truth so persistently ignored is that the foundation upon which every system of justice has been built up is the protection which each member of society must perforce give to his fellows, in order to obtain from them the protection necessary for his own safety. Although this deprives the individual of the power to enforce his own conception of what is due to him from his fellows, he nevertheless submits to the

deprivation, because he realises that the liberty to coerce any one of his weaker neighbours is worth less than nothing if his other neighbours, singly or jointly, are left at liberty to coerce *him*. Self-preservation, the first law of nature—not any sense of moral obligation—compelled prehistoric man to defend his fellows against personal violence, thus setting up the conditions out of which every system of justice has been evolved.

Perhaps it will be said that the case of nations differs from that of individuals because, originally, man had nothing to defend except his person, therefore the practice of mutual protection against personal violence fulfilled all the requirements of primitive justice; and as man slowly acquired other interests, the same protection was gradually extended to them also. Civilised nations, on the contrary, already having many important interests beyond the mere defence of their territory, it is thought that some international plan for safeguarding those interests must precede or accompany any

agreement for the suppression of war, and that nations could not safely rely upon the gradual development of a system of justice which might eventually become effective, but would not be immediately available for the protection of a nation's interests. There might be some force in this contention if nations were required to limit their armaments, or give up their existing defensive alliances, or pledge themselves not to make war, or even bind themselves by treaty for any definite period, but as they are called upon to do none of these things no risk would be incurred. A nation could always regain its former liberty of action by withdrawing from the compact, but it would be unlikely to take that step, because it could not thereby recover the old power of imposing its will (by the employment or threat of force) upon any weaker state having the protection of the alliance.

An aggressive nation might strive to prevent the formation of the proposed international compact, but it is self-evident that such a nation's reason for

thwarting the agreement would provide the other nations with the strongest possible motive for making it effective. A treaty for mutual defence, open to all sovereign states, will automatically set up an alliance against any disturber of the world's peace, and will make it no longer possible for a government to justify, even to its own people, the invasion of another country on the plea of self-defence.

It may be objected that an unqualified agreement for mutual defence would deprive a nation of the free employment of force for objects generally considered legitimate. Bearing in mind that only nations of independent status would be parties to the treaty, which would have no concern with any questions arising between a member of the alliance and a people under its control, it is unlikely that any claim against another signatory state, however just it might be, would have sufficient importance to be worth maintaining by force of arms. Of course, justice must be upheld without regard to considerations of loss or gain, but its

vindication cannot in future be left to a nation fighting for its own interests ; that duty must be undertaken by the general body of nations or not at all. Justice is something which no man can gain for himself, but which each man helps to secure for his fellows, and that must be equally true of nations. The outcome of the policy of neutrality towards belligerents, in other words allowing each nation to enforce what it chooses to regard as its own rights, is to be seen in the perpetual warfare which mankind has had to endure from time immemorial, culminating in the stupendous conflict which now threatens to engulf our civilisation. This should be no matter for surprise, because it can hardly be doubted that if, in the same way, individual men were henceforth allowed by their fellows to attempt to enforce their own rights, society would become extinct in a month.

XX

Those who believe that the use of force under any circumstances is wrong will see little gain in freeing a nation from the sole responsibility of maintaining its rights by force, if similar methods must be employed by the whole body of nations acting together. To point out that an overwhelming preponderance of force is unlikely to be challenged will provoke the retort that, even so, the peace attained by such means would be unsatisfactory, because it would be imposed by the threat of force, and would not come about as the result of a better spirit among nations. This view, which is very widely held, denotes the absence of any true conception of the real significance of law, or its relation to the moral advancement of mankind. Law prevails because the standard of social conduct necessary to maintain the safety and peace of the

individual is willingly enforced upon the others by each member of the community *for his own sake*, if from no higher motive. The consequence of this is that all are made to conform to the required standard, and the supremacy of law is upheld despite the fact that there is hardly a member of society who would not be tempted upon occasion to infringe it, some for a worthy and others for a base purpose, if that could be done with impunity. Men so easily fall short of their own ideal of conduct, that the standard which they set for themselves would not be even remotely approached in practice without the help of the law, which means the restraint imposed upon the individual member of society by his fellows. It is a truism that men cannot be made moral by Act of Parliament, but it is no less true that morality cannot be preserved without the help of law. If, under present conditions, national interests often require honourable men to deceive one another and humane men to slay one another, it is not because rulers and statesmen who set

armies into motion are monsters of iniquity, but because nations have not hitherto undertaken the duty of defending each other, which among men in their individual capacity must have been the very first step on the path of civilisation.

XXI

In undertaking to make war upon any nation which attacks another, it cannot be denied that a serious responsibility is assumed, but if it has been agreed that action shall only be taken jointly by all the parties to the treaty, no undue risk would be incurred. The special alliances which most nations find it necessary to make, involve risks which are immeasurably greater, because, although a nation's obligation extends only to perhaps two or three allies, they would probably be faced, in any conflict, by a

combination of similar strength, and the chances of victory or defeat would be more or less evenly balanced. A general agreement for mutual defence would always bring such an overwhelming margin of force against a would-be aggressor, that in the unlikely event of a contest the punishment for a breach of the peace would be as certain as anything human can be.

It may be asked: What guarantee would there be against the possibility of a strong combination of two or more nations breaking away from the alliance to commit some act of aggression? Whilst it must be admitted that there could be no absolute guarantee against such an eventuality, it is clear that a powerful nation with dreams of conquest would no longer have the assistance of other countries which, in the past, could have been forced into an alliance as the only means of preserving a semblance of independence for themselves. Also, it is hardly necessary to point out that a combination for aggressive purposes would be a far more hopeless

venture against a world-wide alliance than it is under existing conditions. Individual members of society have no better guarantee against robbery and violence by a combination among their lawless fellow-citizens. The police and the entire organisation for administering justice are merely instruments employed by the members of a community for the purpose of protecting each other. If the law of a civilised community, and all those having any part in its administration were suddenly swept away, they would be infallibly replaced, because each person with anything to lose, no matter how little it might be, is willing to share the responsibility of protecting other people's property; nothing else gives him any claim upon *them* to protect his own possessions. It is a delusion to suppose that nations must set up some superior authority controlling a neutralised force, and by disarming themselves give this body the power to enforce international justice. Such ideas spring from a superficial view of the system by which justice

is secured among individuals, and the instinct which leads practical men to reject them is quite sound.

If nations should be found unwilling to pledge themselves in advance, upon the ground that unforeseen circumstances might arise to cause a nation's interest to conflict with the obligation which it had undertaken, then each must be allowed to reserve the right to withdraw from the alliance at short notice. An agreement which does not bind any of the parties irrevocably may seem to be of very questionable value, but as a matter of fact, international treaties have never had any greater binding force than the pledged word of the signatories, and history proves how readily that may be disregarded when a nation's vital interests are at stake. Nor is it surprising that the code recognised by men of honour has not hitherto been observed by nations. If a community can be imagined in which each member refused, on principle, to defend any other whose life or property might be endangered, no greater regard for truth

or honour would be shown in their intercourse one with another than nations exhibit under present conditions.

XXII

A treaty open to all independent states, with the single object of defending any one of them against attack, will perhaps be considered a very inadequate substitute for an international court of justice, and an agreement for limitation of armaments. It is a practical aim, however, which must be realised before any further advance is possible. The end of the present war will bring many nations into conference for the settlement of terms of peace. There will be re-adjustments of frontier and probably the creation of new autonomous states, with a collective guarantee of their territorial integrity. The peace can not be made *permanent* unless the nations will extend this guarantee, so as not only to protect

their new creations, but also to defend any one of *themselves* against invasion. A readiness to accept that responsibility may shorten the duration of the present war, because some terms of peace which, taken alone, would be regarded as impossible by one side or the other, might prove acceptable if the settlement is made to include a general treaty for mutual defence.

Nothing could better prepare the way for a righteous and enduring peace than a preliminary declaration by each of the belligerents that it will undertake to join with all the others in defending every signatory nation's frontiers, as they may be finally determined at any peace settlement to which it may eventually agree. This should greatly facilitate negotiations when the time comes, because any necessary transfer of territory which under former conditions might be resisted to the death by a nation for strategic reasons or in order to save its prestige, would perhaps be viewed in a very different light as part of a world-wide transaction which would

not only secure for it the permanent assistance for defensive purposes of all its present allies, but also of some other nations which have remained neutral in this war, with the addition of a similar undertaking (for which it may be considered worth) from those nations which have been its enemies in the present struggle. The proposed defensive alliance should not be limited to the belligerents, but left open to each sovereign state to enter at any time that its own interests may dictate. If it be a sound theory that personal safety and justice depend upon the practice of mutual protection, then a treaty on these lines is an indispensable condition of national safety, and must be regarded as the initial stage in the development of any complete system for the attainment of justice among nations.

To those who foresee the possibility of some future disputes which might not lend themselves to settlement by judicial methods, it may be pointed out that not even the most elaborate legal code provides against *every* wrong which one

person can do to another. In the absence of high principle or good feeling, there are offences which must be tolerated in every civilised community, because the law cannot take cognizance of them, and the individual must not forcibly resent them. Therefore, in considering the possibility of ultimately applying judicial methods to international affairs, it is unnecessary to show that every conceivable question will be capable of satisfactory adjustment by their means. Just as individuals must tolerate lesser wrongs in order to secure their greater rights, so the general body of nations will risk the possible sacrifice of some comparatively unimportant rights to obtain the sure protection of their vital interests.

XXIII

It may be thought that as an international agreement for mutual defence would be fatal to the ambitions of some

states, their assent would therefore be withheld. If their refusal could prevent the formation of the alliance it would be intelligible, but assuming that a sufficiently powerful combination can be formed without them, such nations would come to realise that they had nothing to lose but much to gain by entering it. The nations generally are more concerned to preserve undiminished the power and possessions which they already enjoy than to embark on military enterprises for the purpose of aggrandisement, but under existing conditions a nation cannot see without apprehension a possible rival increasing more rapidly than itself in population, wealth, or military power, because its own relative position is thereby weakened, leaving it more exposed to the risk of invasion. Thus it can happen that a nation, without any provocation whatever, may seek a pretext for making war, the ultimate object of which is nevertheless really defensive.

The same necessity sometimes induces a nation to strive to acquire by conquest

or diplomatic pressure territory of strategic importance, merely to prevent it falling into a rival's possession. Of course, innumerable wars have been waged for which no imaginable necessity could be pleaded. The acts of a nation are the acts of the individual men who control its policy, and they are dictated by motives which are neither better nor worse than those which actuate individuals. It is true that a man never thinks it necessary for the security of his own family that he should attack and destroy the more rapidly growing family of an unoffending neighbour, but this does not support the unfounded belief that nations are inherently more covetous or bloodthirsty than the average citizen ; it merely goes to show that the humane virtues cannot flourish in an atmosphere charged with fear and suspicion. The confidence which prevails among individuals, owing to the practice of mutual protection, can be established among nations only by the same means. If men can be imagined as having constantly

observed "neutrality" towards one another after the manner of nations, they must always have remained naked savages.

XXIV

There is no reason to fear that nations may decline to make themselves responsible for one another's safety. They already do so within the limits of a dual or triple or quadruple alliance, *without* obtaining national security or any relief from the burden of armaments. They will not refuse to extend the scope of their alliances and merge them into one embracing the general body of nations, if they can thereby free themselves from all serious danger and at the same time open up a prospect of ending the futile competition of armaments. The idea of a nation or group accepting the alliance of an unfriendly country may at first sight appear to be Utopian, but it would be

made quite feasible by reason of the large number of other states participating, and because the proposed treaty is of such a character that each nation will be adequately protected against any other within the alliance, no less than against those nations (if any) which remain outside. The unanimous support of the nations would not be essential; the adhesion of a large majority of them would suffice, including, of course, most of the great powers; but it is vitally important that any independent state should always be free to enter the alliance, although it may have declined to do so at the outset.

It has already been pointed out that, if necessary, the contracting nations could retain the right of withdrawal. If a treaty for mutual defence proved beneficial it would not be allowed to lapse. If, on the other hand, the alliance should break up when put to the test, no nation would find itself in a less favourable position than it originally occupied. One effect of a general treaty for mutual

defence would be to render obsolete the entire body of international law relating to the duties and rights of neutrals, since there would no longer be any neutrals. A nation making war upon another would find the enemy upon every frontier, every port an enemy port, and every ship an enemy ship.

XXV

The restoration of peace will probably find the nations prepared to co-operate for the prevention of war, but it may be predicted with certainty that they will resist the smallest interference in their domestic affairs. A nation which itself refuses to grant freedom to subject peoples will even more surely refuse to grant it at the behest of an international court, and will therefore not willingly become party to an agreement which requires it to accept the jurisdiction of any court in such a matter. On the other

hand, a nation disposed to extend freedom to all its subjects will do so in its own good time without dictation from outside, which might well be a hindrance rather than a help. If we try to imagine even freedom-loving Britain agreeing to leave the settlement of Irish or Indian problems to an international body, we shall realise at once how hopeless is the expectation that in any near future the subjects of great states may get redress of their grievances from an international tribunal. This makes it desirable that the greatest measure of liberation practically attainable should be insisted upon at the peace settlement, but it affords no guide as to how far the world-conflict should be prolonged for the purpose of obtaining self-government for subject peoples. It cannot be said that the Allies, in taking up the German challenge, entered the war for the removal of political disabilities; indeed, had they been successful in their efforts to avert war, the oppressed nationalities would have been left to work out their own salvation, like other nations

which have had to win liberty for themselves in the past. The Allies were forced into the war in order to resist Germany's brutal invasion of the territory of its neighbours, and no peace is even thinkable which would leave Germany in possession or control of any of that territory.

Beyond this, compensation must be obtained certainly for Belgium, which has suffered so grievously in defending its own honour and the interests of other nations ; but the war expenditure has become so colossal that the cost to the various belligerents of carrying on the struggle for a month would furnish the means of reconstruction, and it is therefore unlikely that the question of reparation will present any serious obstacle when the time comes to discuss peace.

The only further object which justifies the prolongation of the war with its daily toll of thousands of lives and millions of pounds of treasure, is one which transcends everything else in importance, namely, to ensure as far as is humanly

possible against the recurrence of a similar catastrophe. So tremendous are the issues, that the Allies cannot afford to make any mistake in the policy upon which they mean to rely for security in the future, yet in all the published statements of those who speak with authority there is a lack of precision which suggests that no clearly-defined principle has been adopted by the Allies for their guidance in any concerted action that may be taken to secure the peace of the future.

Reliance seems to be placed chiefly upon the democratisation of the German system of government, and the loss of prestige which the militarist rulers of Germany would suffer as the result of a complete and unmistakable defeat. No doubt this would gratify the very natural desire to punish the authors of the war, but as a guarantee against a future outbreak it cannot be treated seriously at all.

Much also appears to be expected from a settlement which will satisfy the national aspirations of subject peoples.

A responsible British statesman has said :
“ We must make a settlement so just that none will wish to disturb it.” Who, knowing anything of human nature, can believe this is possible ? Freedom is a priceless blessing, and the more widely it can be diffused the better, but one trembles at the thought that after the untold sacrifices of this war the peace of the future may rest on no more secure foundation than a democratic form of government imposed upon the German people, and an extension of freedom among the smaller nations of Europe.

It is true that much prominence has been given to proposals for the formation of a league of nations to enforce peace, but unfortunately these proposals are always made dependent upon the establishment of a world-tribunal to which international disputes must be submitted, and this feature places the scheme outside the region of practical politics. Attention is thus diverted from the only real security against a breach of the peace, namely, a definite alliance of the nations for

territorial defence, and consideration of this vital matter is relegated to some uncertain future "after we have won the war," notwithstanding that a general willingness to form such an alliance might profoundly modify the war aims of the various belligerents.

There are many who feel that a settlement which might be completely satisfactory in every other respect would still be unacceptable if it should leave Germany unpunished and its present rulers undisturbed. If the punishment of crime be an indispensable condition of safety and justice among individuals, how, it is asked, can international peace and justice be expected in the future unless punishment be meted out to Germany for a crime more terrible in its consequences than anything which the history of nations records? The answer is, of course, that without mutual protection a nation cannot be, and never has been, judged by the same moral standard as an individual who receives the protection of the whole community against violence

from any of its members. If, for example, Germany believed it possible that it might some day be attacked by an awakened and therefore much more formidable Russia, this would not *justify* Germany in forcing a war whilst the conditions were still favourable to itself, but under those circumstances the act would call for a far less severe judgment than if it had been committed with a general defensive alliance in operation. Had Germany been compelled to defend itself against an entirely unprovoked attack, Britain and other neutrals would have occupied the rôle of mere spectators, and if Britain had been the victim of a sudden and treacherous invasion, Germany and other neutrals would have played the same heroic and highly moral part. That is the true reason why the nations are engaged in tearing each other to pieces, and it points unmistakably to the conclusion that security for the future is to be obtained not by the deterrent effect of punishment inflicted upon Germany, but by an international agreement for mutual

defence which, for the first time, will bring nations into the same relationship as individuals, and make it possible to apply to them the same principles of justice.

But it may be said that Germany, or at any rate a very influential section of its people, had long openly avowed a policy of aggrandisement at the expense of others, and that these ambitions must have been shared by the German Government, otherwise they would not have rejected so contemptuously every proposal for arbitration or other peaceful settlement of the quarrel which gave rise to the war. Even these damning facts do not prove that German militarism is the real obstacle to international peace, nor do they disprove the view that the root cause of international strife has been the blind devotion of all nations to the fetish of neutrality. Nothing but this cowardly and immoral superstition could have made it possible that in a highly civilised country, men of repute should publicly advocate a policy of national robbery with violence, not only without the disapproval

of the German people themselves, but—what is still more remarkable—without any protest from other nations to whom the matter was one of vital interest. Far from denouncing these criminal aims, some writers in other countries—notably England and the United States—were at pains to commend them as proper and even necessary for a great nation to pursue. “World Empire or Downfall” are really very widely believed to be the alternatives from which a great nation must choose; and indeed, so long as the observance of neutrality towards belligerents leaves each nation exposed to the danger of subjection by an aggressive power or group, some will be led to attack others in order to forestall a possible attack upon themselves.

It may be argued that whether Germany had or had not any semblance of an excuse for beginning the war, the Allies dare not shirk the duty of inflicting punishment for the fiendish and unheard-of methods of warfare which she has employed. If war continues to be permitted in the

future, no doubt it is highly important that it shall be waged by what are called humane and civilised methods, and that even the slightest lowering of the recognised standards should be penalised. Surely then it will be said, Germany must be punished for her flagrant breaches of the accepted rules of warfare. This would hardly admit of question if war *must* still be tolerated ; but if, as an outcome of the present conflict, a nation will no longer be left at liberty to attack another the case is different. Obviously it would be a needless sacrifice to prolong the struggle in order to secure the observance of "humane" methods of warfare in the future, if the chief reason for which the Allies are fighting with so much determination is to make an end of war altogether.

But it may be felt that even if the punishment of Germany be not a practical necessity, it must be a moral duty to penalise that nation's brazen "defiance of the laws of God and man" in its prosecution of the war. The horrible methods to which the enemy has

descended, however, cannot be regarded, in themselves, as a violation of law either human or divine. The commandment "Thou shalt not kill" makes no distinction between shrapnel or poison gas as instruments of death, nor does it even discriminate between the slaughter of combatants and non-combatants. There is no reason to believe that in the sight of Heaven it is more criminal to murder people who are entirely unarmed than to kill in battle the troops of a country which is fighting solely to resist attack. It is because all the nations, in the capacity of neutrals, have repeatedly acquiesced in wars of conquest as being "legitimate" that they have neither the privilege nor the duty to stand forth as champions of the divine law, now that the world has been overtaken by this enormous disaster in which they are themselves involved, and for which their former attitude of unrighteous aloofness is in no small degree responsible.

Still, it will be said that Germany must be made to suffer for her gross violation

of the laws of war which are recognised by all civilised nations. But infamous as the German methods of warfare may be, they do not constitute a breach of *law* properly so called. Law claims allegiance only from those whom it protects, and international law protects nobody, because the nations have never undertaken to enforce it. Thus, if the positions had been reversed, and another nation had been guilty of introducing barbarous methods of warfare in fighting against Germany, she would have had no claim upon the general body of nations for protection against the outrage. Germany's action has simply earned for her the reprobation of the civilised world, and left other nations free to adopt any methods they may choose to employ against herself. These considerations are advanced not in extenuation of German barbarities, for which the writer feels a horror that no words can express, but to emphasise the fact that the Allies are not fighting to vindicate any existing law. The task which they have to accomplish is to lay

the foundation of that law by the only practicable means, namely a definite alliance for territorial defence open to all independent states willing to co-operate, including Germany and her present allies.

Until the enemy definitely announces that he will be prepared to evacuate every square mile of occupied territory from which he may not already have been driven, the war must be prosecuted with the utmost possible vigour, but to continue the struggle beyond that in order to "punish" him and to gain the security for future peace which a more democratic form of Government in Germany is expected to afford, would be sheer madness if a general defensive alliance can be obtained. What further punishment can it be deemed necessary to inflict upon a country which, besides suffering millions of casualties and incurring thousands of millions of pounds of debt, has endured years of something like semi-starvation and entirely lost an immense and valuable foreign trade? If these unheard-of sacrifices, without any accession of

territory or other compensations, will not have cured Germany of her penchant for war, then nothing will ever do so. The Germans are a persevering people, but it is highly improbable that they would venture to try again in the hope of better luck next time, even if equally favourable conditions could ever recur. A general defensive alliance, however, will completely transform the conditions which made it possible for Germany to dream of waging a war of conquest. Austria's dependence upon her powerful neighbour will be a thing of the past, and her assistance could not therefore be relied upon by Germany in any future attempt to dominate Europe. If Germany, armed to the teeth and reinforced by alliances, with an elaborate system of espionage and with all the advantages of surprise, failed to subjugate nations largely unprepared and inviting piecemeal destruction by their pathetic attachment to the policy of neutrality, it is inconceivable that any nation will set itself in the future to make conquests at the expense of the others when they have

entered into a world-wide combination for territorial defence.

It has come to be regarded almost as an axiom that modern warfare is due to the survival of autocracies, and therefore the abolition of the semi-autocratic government in Germany is considered an indispensable condition of a secure peace. The prevalence of this belief does not prove its truth, and there seems better ground for the view that the general recognition of war as a legitimate instrument for carrying out national policy explains the otherwise unaccountable fact that a people as well informed as the Germans should in this twentieth century tolerate autocratic rule and allow themselves to be exploited by an insufferably arrogant military caste. External danger is ever fatal to internal liberty because patriotism willingly sacrifices individual freedom in the interest, real or imagined, of the national safety ; and if the peculiar vulnerability of Germany, owing to its geographical position, has reconciled its people to something like a military

despotism which is a danger to the world's peace, the practical policy for other nations is not to aim directly at the overthrow of the autocratic government of Germany by war, and thus rally to its defence even those elements in Germany which themselves detest it, but by forming a world-wide defensive combination which Germany and her allies should be free to enter, the nations can protect themselves against the danger of militarism (German or any other) by rendering it at once powerless for aggression and superfluous for defence. Militarism seems almost universally to be regarded as the cause of war, but it is much nearer the truth to say that the world's toleration of any nation's right to make war produces the evils of militarism. Tortuous diplomacy and the pernicious influence of powerful armament rings are likewise *consequences* rather than *causes* of war. Men fought quite as bitterly and even more continuously when armaments consisted of bow and spear, and diplomacy, secret or otherwise, was unknown.

The duplicity often practised by nations in the past, under conditions of neutrality towards belligerents, raises the question whether a general defensive alliance would not be undermined sooner or later by intrigue, but in order to stand any chance of success at least one-half the world must first betray and then be prepared to fight the other half. The prospect hardly seems good enough to tempt even those nations which might be unscrupulous enough to embark on the adventure. The only real security for future peace is an international defensive alliance, because without it the growth of mutual confidence and goodwill is impossible. If our posterity are going to be too stupid or treacherous to maintain such an alliance once it has been established, they will neither deserve peace nor be permitted to enjoy it, no matter what further sacrifices this generation may continue to make for their benefit.

XXVI

Concerning the incessantly growing burden of armaments which, even in time of peace, had put such a tremendous strain upon the resources of modern nations, it is the firm conviction of the writer that, in the absence of a treaty for mutual defence, relief will not come by way of an international agreement for limitation, and this conviction will be shared by any one who may attempt to work out a practical scheme to which nations could reasonably be expected to subscribe, or which, if adopted, would be likely to work without friction. Even if the initial difficulty of fixing the relative military strength of the nations should be surmounted, there would still remain the practical impossibility of ensuring against an increase above the agreed standard. Without a general defensive alliance it may be assumed that each nation would

arm itself to the utmost limit allowed by the agreement; but beyond this, especially at a time of international tension, voluntary effort (more or less spontaneous in character) would seek to provide a margin of safety; and either as regards men, munitions, or money, there are many ways in which the military power of a nation could and would be extended without a technical breach of any agreement, but with consequences fatal to the maintenance of good relations. Disarmament *by agreement* teems with difficulties, and they would not have been overcome even with the agreement an accomplished fact and faithfully observed in the spirit as well as the letter. The mere limitation of armaments will not prevent war, and in the event of a conflict between two nations the belligerents would necessarily arm to their fullest capacity. It is impossible to believe that other nations would consent to remain bound by the agreement in the presence of a great and victorious army, which might have grown powerful enough easily to overwhelm

them all if they had not allowed their military preparations to exceed the agreed strength.

It is significant that most men in civilised countries have *voluntarily* discontinued the once universal practice of carrying arms, and that a community which goes so far as to prohibit smoky chimneys and street noises still permits a private citizen to arm himself with the deadliest weapons, and contents itself with penalising their improper use. A nation might begin to consider the policy of reducing its expenditure on armaments when a general treaty for mutual defence had provided some additional security against attack, and at the same time precluded the employment of its own military power for aggressive purposes with any hope of success. In every country the demand of the taxpayer for reduced expenditure on armaments will be irresistible with a general defensive alliance in force. It is quite certain that if, contrary to the opinion expressed here, an agreement for limitation is found

necessary and practicable, it would be vastly easier of attainment after nations have undertaken to defend each other.

Whatever may be the motives which are supposed to actuate governments in making ever greater demands for the maintenance of huge armaments, it is certain that the consequent heavy taxation is only tolerated by the people themselves in the belief that the sacrifice is necessary for the national safety and the protection of legitimate interests. The present attitude of neutrality towards belligerents leaves any nation at the mercy of a more powerful assailant. It is therefore not surprising that military precautions are taken and defensive alliances arranged in the effort to make successful invasion impossible. Nor is it to be wondered at if alliances and powerful armaments, even though intended solely for defence, should create uneasiness among other nations, and thus lead to rival combinations and military measures. Each nation piles up armaments against the mere possibility of danger, because if

it should be attacked, the other nations would stand aside and witness its destruction without raising a finger to save it. The practical remedy for this state of things is a general agreement for mutual defence, giving to weak nations a feeling of greater security, and removing from strong nations much of the temptation to which they are at present exposed. If an international alliance against *any* nation which attacks another will not arrest the growth of armaments and lead to their gradual reduction automatically or by agreement, it is difficult to see how relief is ever to be obtained.

XXVII

International peace is generally believed to depend upon the attainment of a higher standard of rectitude on the part of nations in their dealings with each other. No doubt warfare and inflated armaments

would disappear if *every* nation *always* acted with perfect justice and wisdom ; and it may be said with equal truth that if individuals did the same, law would be superfluous and the Millennium would be at hand. The problem under consideration, however, is not to inquire how human nature may be perfected, but to ascertain the means by which nations can ensure for themselves the same measure of safety and justice as individual men, with all their shortcomings, have long enjoyed. Most men have faith in the ultimate fulfilment of the prophecy that a time will come when nation will no longer life up sword against nation, but no one can imagine that this happy state will result from a sudden change of heart among the peoples of the earth, or that it will be brought about by means of some ingeniously-contrived plan. It has been the writer's aim to show that no progress can be made towards permanent peace, without an international alliance for territorial defence that will be immediately practicable at the end of the war ;

and that for any nation to participate in such an alliance is perfectly sound policy, which, sooner or later, all will be forced to adopt. Nations, like individuals, must first secure the rough justice which rests upon properly-directed force, before they can possibly attain the perfect justice based on universal righteousness.

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